



The Bible Miracle of Speaking in Tongues

There is, perhaps, no more publicized miracle today than that of speaking in tongues. It is the one miracle that those who believe they can do miracles most frequently claim as having been done. In speaking with people who claim to have spoken in tongues today they often describe an emotional experience and a feeling that they have never felt before. When asked what they said when they spoke in tongues, the reply is often, "I don't know." And when you listen to those who claim to be speaking in tongues what comes out of their mouth doesn't even appear to resemble language at all, but "gibberish." Is this what the Bible teaches regarding speaking in tongues? What was their purpose? Was it an emotional experience? Was it not meant to be understood by the speaker? Was it merely gibberish?

Let's answer that last question first. The Bible teaches that the miracle of speaking in tongues was not gibberish nor was it language that was unknown. In Acts 2:4 we read, "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." So what was it that they spoke? We don't have to read too far to understand the answer to that question. In Acts 2:7-8, those who heard the

apostles speaking in tongues were amazed and then they evaluated what they heard. They said to each other, "Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?" What they were amazed at was the fact that these Galileans could speak in the language of their birth. In Acts 2:11 they make this clear, saying "we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God." The apostles were speaking human languages that other people could understand. This point is made clear by Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:10-11 where he is discussing the appropriate use of the miracle of tongues. He says, "There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning, but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me."^{ESV} The languages that they spoke in had meaning. The miracle of speaking in tongues was not mere gibberish.

We still wonder whether tongues were understood by the one who was speaking. It's possible that a person could miraculously speak in tongues and someone else understand him, but he not understand what he himself is saying, right? In 1 Corinthians 14:4,

Paul answers this question. He says, "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself...." In the context, what Paul means by "edify" is that the individual understands the tongue. This is clear when he says in the next part of the verse, "but he that prophesieth edifieth the church." Paul is comparing and contrasting the spiritual gift of tongues verses the spiritual gift of prophecy. Tongues are not always understood by others, and therefore, they do not edify. They edify the one speaking in the tongue, but no other, if there is no one there who knows the tongue or who can interpret the tongue. On the other hand the gift of prophecy always edifies because it is always spoken in a tongue that can be understood. We can conclude that if speech edifies (whether it is a foreign tongue or a prophecy), then it is an understood tongue and so, since tongues edified the speaker, tongues were always understood by the person speaking them.

But what about the emotional aspect to speaking in tongues. Interestingly enough, the scriptures never speak of speaking in tongues being accompanied by an emotional experience. One would think that if speaking in tongues was such a great emotional event that such would be described as accompanying the gift of tongues in the New Testament. We read

The Bible Miracle of Speaking in Tongues



such regarding other events, such as baptism. In Acts 8:39 after the Ethiopian nobleman was baptized, it said he went on his way rejoicing. Why wasn't the gift of speaking in tongues described in a similar way? It seems that there wasn't any extraordinary emotional experience necessarily attached to the gift of tongues.

What was its purpose then? The Bible teaches that the gift of tongues was part of the set of miracles that the apostles and disciples of the early church could perform in order to convince others regarding the truthfulness of their statements. Jesus said in Mark 16:17-18 "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." We then read their purpose in Mark 16:20, "And they

went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen." The signs were given to confirm the word. This was also the case with the miracle of speaking in tongues. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 14:22, "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not...." The miraculous gift of tongues was a sign for the unbeliever and that gives us insight into it's purpose. Jesus commanded the apostles to take the gospel to the whole world; how could they do that if they didn't have some way to communicate with people of other languages? These people would be unbelievers when initially approached. The miracle of tongues, therefore, was to convince people who did not believe the gospel to believe it. And that was the exact effect it had upon the people to whom the apostles preached in Acts 2.

We can conclude, then, that the Bible teaches that 1) the miraculous gift of tongues was the ability to speak in a foreign, but understandable, language (i.e. it wasn't just gibberish), 2) it was understood by the person who spoke it, though it wasn't necessarily understood by the person who heard it, 3) that it wasn't necessarily accompanied by any extraordinary emotional experience, and 4) that it's purpose was to communicate with unbelievers to get them to accept the gospel of Christ. Tongues were certainly an important part in the construction of the church, but they were destined to end when God's revelation in written form was completed. Paul tells us as much in 1 Corinthians 13:8; "whether there be tongues, they shall cease." Tongues, along with all other Bible miracles, have ceased, and we now have God's perfectly revealed word in the scriptures.

"Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not...." (1 Corinthians 14:22)



Bible Studies for the week of February 27th, 2005

- AM Sermon..... Beatitudes—The Meek
- Scripture Reading.....Matthew 5:1-11
- PM Sermon..... Following After Holiness
- Scripture Reading..... Hebrews 12:14
- Sunday Class The Book of Hebrews
- Wednesday Class.....Lessons from the Cross

Kevin's Korner

Spring time is just around the corner. The grass is turning green. Buds are starting to peek out here and there on the branches of the trees. The birds are looking for nice places to build their nests and pretty soon the kids will be out on spring break.

Our gospel meeting with Jake King is going to be a great way to kick off

the springtime, this time of renewal with new life and energy. Let's focus our efforts in this next week and see if we can invite someone to come to our meeting for spiritual renewal and restoration. Let's do what we can to promote this time of study and pray for the success of our efforts.

Springtime is also the time for Bubba's BBQ to

open in Eureka Springs. This past Friday, I met Rusty over there and we enjoyed renewal of a different type. While there, I was reminded that Rusty was still going to regular therapy—physical, that is. But then again, we all need therapy of one kind or another. Bubba's did the trick for me.



Spring Gospel Meeting March 6th—8th With Jake King



Schedule of Studies

Sunday Bible Class: Principles for Preachers.....	9:30 AM
Sunday AM Worship: Messages for Men	10:20 AM
Sunday PM Worship: Words for Women	6:00 PM
Monday Bible Study: Exhortations for Employees	7:00 PM
Tuesday Bible Study: Grace of God	7:00 PM

All are invited and welcome to come and study God's word with us during this time.

Records for the week of February 20th, 2005

Sunday Bible Class	51
Sunday AM Worship.....	68
Sunday PM Worship.....	56
Wednesday Night Study.....	45
Contribution.....	\$1505.67
Budget.....	\$1778.13



The Berryville Bible Beacon is published under the authority of the eldership of the Berryville church of Christ: Clay Bozarth, Leon Duncan, Bill Fort, Bruce Foster, Glenn Quigley. Editor: Kevin Cauley. Please address all correspondence to: Berryville Bible Beacon, 909 W. Trimble, Berryville AR 72616 or e-mail us at bvccoc@alltel.net.

Praises, Prayers, and Proclamations

Announcements

- We are thankful to God for this new Lord's Day. It is the day we honor His Son and the Love that He has shown us through Him. Let us worship in spirit and in truth!
- Please remember the following in your prayers: Jessica Anderson, Donna Henderson, the Morrell family, Billy Wylie and family, Chelsea Williams.
- Please don't forget our shut-ins: Daisy Farmer, Curtis and Opal Hull, and Edith Mischler. Please try to visit one of these folks this week.
- Our gospel meeting is coming up next week! Let's get those flyers into the hands of those around us and do our best to plant and water!
- If you would like to teach or would like a break from teaching, please see Leon Duncan regarding next quarter's schedule.
- The monthly elders and deacons meeting will be held next Sunday evening after services.
- There will be no Bible study at the nursing home this week due to their monthly birthday party.
- Truth for Today Commentaries on the book of Ezekiel are in the foyer. They are \$27.00 each.
- Our pantry item is: Fabric Softener.



Welcome!

Family Times for Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class:	9:30 AM
Sunday Morning Worship:	10:30 AM
Sunday Evening Worship:	6:00 PM
Ladies Bible Class:	10:30 AM
Wed. Evening Bible Class:	7:00 PM

Serving Each Other

	February 27th, 2005	March 6th, 2005
Sunday Morning		
Songs:	Ken Smith	Kevin Cauley
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Jake King
Opening Prayer:	Bob Phillips	George Eddings
Scripture Reading:	Brandon Foster	Dan Hand
Lord's Table	Leon Duncan	Clay Bozarth
	Glenn Williams	Glenn Quigley
(assist)	Brent Moore	Brent Moore
	Jack Gentry	Ray Duncan
Closing Prayer	Jerry Roller	Ken Smith
Sunday Evening		
Songs:	Clay Bozarth	Kevin Cauley
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Jake King
Opening Prayer:	Dan Hand	Rusty Windle
Scripture Reading:	John Gass	Jerry Roller
Lord's Table	Dale Pinkley	Irvin Hand
	George Eddings	Bob Phillips
Closing Prayer	Brent Moore	Bob Moore
Wednesday		
Songs:	Glenn Quigley	Glenn Williams
Opening Prayer:	Dale Pinkley	Bill Fort
Invitation:	Kevin Cauley	Rusty Windle
Closing Prayer:	Ray Duncan	Ray Duncan

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.